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PRINCESS PHILLIPINA

A—CHRISTMAS—TALE OF THE CRUSADES BY ARTHUR. B. BENTON. F.A.I.A.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.
—— A.D. 1916. ——

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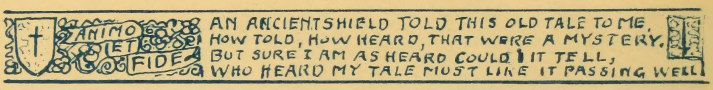

AN ANCIENT SHIELD TOLD THIS OLD TALE TO ME,
HOW TOLD, HOW HEARD, THAT WERE A MYSTERY.
BUT SURE I AM AS HEARD COULD I IT TELL,
WHO HEARD MY TALE MUST LIKE IT PASSING WELL

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BY
ARTHUR B BENTON
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No. 1.

MAY 7 '16.

N time of the crusades a slender maid,
Named Phillipina for her father's sake,
The fairest flower her ancient tree had borne,
Had married Conrad a true hearted prince
Who held his dukedom as a gift from God
And all true men of his own brotherhood.

But after one short month of wedded joy
He rode away at noon of Easter Day
With many knights and stalwart fighting men
Leaving her sad of heart but proud to see
How much her husband big and fair and tall
Beyond comparison outmanned them all.

For Conrad vowed a vow when he did set
His heart to win the maiden for his wife
The perfume of whose lovely blossoming
Brought swarms of suitors; should his quest be won
He leaving home made ten fold dear by her
Would go do battle for the sepulcher.

His people learned to love her in a day,
And in a week they loved her seven fold more
And in a month their lady was so dear
She was enshrined in every heart that held
Some little room where love might find a place,
And sunned by love her beauty grew apace.

But still her heart went journeying with her lord
And through her smiles there came a mist of tears
When from the wars the tardy messengers
Brought tidings scant from ever further east
Where he with English Richard fought and won
Battle and siege beneath the Syrian sun.

HEN When news failed and
she in troubled dreams,
Three times repeated saw
her good knight lay
Wounded and wan upon
a rude camp bed
Waking in bitter pain the long slow nights,
With fevered brow and courage well nigh spent,
She knew this for a ghostly summons sent,

To which her her heart responding as the heart
Of a true soldier leaps within his breast
At the clear call of trumpets to the charge,
Delaying not she set her face to go
To her dear lord, not for a moments space
Counting the cost so she might see his face.

She took no counsel with her nearest kin,
Else they had stayed her from so wild a quest,
But bade her warder old Sir Christopher,
Who loved her Conrad dearer than dear life,
Pick from her guard his twenty stoutest men
Who would not fly though each were faced by ten.

With him and these and Elspeth whose great arms
Were first to fold her when a newborn babe,
Two women more and a few serving men,
Leaving in charge a trusted castellan,
At close of early mass on whit-sunday
Before the sun was up she rode away,

In such sore haste she could ill brook delay
And fain had kept her saddle night and day
But when they stopped to give their horses rest
Before she slept she found some church or shrine
Upon whose altar she would lay her gift
And to high heaven her one petition lift.

AND on the road despite her
urgency,
When they met lame or blind
or seeming poor
She reined her horse what
time it took to give
A generous alms for which she ever begged
From each a prayer that ever was the same,
That God would keep her Conrad till she came.

The little children flying from her men,
Then halting tempted by their martial show,
Came trooping back in answer to her call.
And for her largess and her lovely smile
Promised to say her prayer both night and morn
Till end of harvest of the growing corn.

So that there followed her along the Rhine,
Across the mountains into sunny France,
And down the smiling valley of the Rhone,
An ever growing incense cloud of prayer
From hearts whom Grief had taught the way to pray
And innocents whom God doth hear alway

At length they came to Arles, there embarked,
And found all winds propitious so they came
With a straight course to Akra and again
They took to horse and rode until they came
Unto a christian Camp in which they found
Prince Conrad lying in a deadly swound,

Forespent with wounds he got at Akra's siege
Where he had done great valorous deeds and saved
The Cross from shameful loss and infamy,
So far forespent his soul could find scant room
In its own house so broken was its clay,
And had its wings all plumed to fly away.

THEN She rejoiced for
that her quest was won
And pillowed his dear
head on her sweet breast,
Letting the tides of her
abounding health
Revive the springs of his life ebbing flood,
For well she knew God had not brought her there
But that her love might answer its own prayer.

So by love's potent medicine she won
Prince Conrad back from Death's too fond embrace,
Then nourished him with cunning cookery
Till manly vigor coursed his veins again;
And other sick she nursed, so soon there were
None in that place that did not reverence her.

But when the summer time had nearly waned
And Conrad's strength grew mighty as of old,
The lady Phillipina on a day
Whispered her hope that at the Christmastide,
If so Heaven willed, a babe would bless her arms
Whereat his love was stirred to quick alarms;

That she should be so far from her own bower
For that advent, in a wild war swept land,
Yet for his vow he might not bear her home
So with great state they brought her to the port
Called Haifa and sent her on her way
While for her peace ten thousand men did pray.

She sailed toward the glowing golden west
But kept her face toward the darkening East
Where a great star hung over David's town.
Above the inn of the Nativity,
And as her ship moved outward with the stream
Dreamed such fond dreams as only mothers dream.

UT of the West at midnight
Came a cloud,
A little cloud that hid not
many stars,
But in its breast a thunder-
bolt lay coiled
And when it struck the goodly vessel lay
Wounded to death upon the moon lit sea
Which dragged it down where many ship graves be.

Now by God's grace Sir Christopher had made
A raft of hides for such a chance as this,
And he and his good men who kept the watch
Snatched from the waves their lady and her maids
And some few souls of the ships company
Who had the strength to buffet with the sea.

All else were drowned. Now on the raft were lashed
Some change of raiment, weapons, food and tents
Which with much pain they brought on the third day,
With oar and sail and skilful piloting,
To land upon a wild and barren shore
Where was no trace that man had been before.

A land made desolate where were no wells
Nor any herbs nor fruits for sustenance,
Wherein they wandered weary many days
In thirsty deserts, and our lady's men
Would fain have borne her in a sedan chair
Which some of them had fashioned with nice care,

But she said "Nay, for when God made my feet
He patterned them by mountain doe's that run
Yet weary not, and walk and do not faint;"
And she shared with them every toilsome way
Where naught could frighten her or aught dismay
And still her beauty waxed from day to day.

ING Richard held communion
With his thoughts,
Which by the reading of his
gloomy brow,
Were warning him of heavy
ills to come,
Which prophecy of evil was reflect
In every face of his companion knights
Whose armor, weapons, easy dignity
Proclaimed them full blown flowers of chivalry.
Before the king stood good Sir Christopher,
And he had told the tale whose telling brought
The troubled frown to every hearer's brow.
The little barren hillock where they stood
Was far from roads or any beaten way
And cut in narrow gullies, where were heun
Among the fox's dens and cony holes,
Some ancient cisterns most of which were dry
But some held water from the winter rains;
Their overflow had made a marsh whereon
The horses of the knights fed greedily.
Around the hill in wide circumference
Lay drifted sand and desert heat and glare
Horizoned by a chain of purple hills
Distorted by the palpitating air
Into wierd changing shapes that mocked the eye.
At length the king gave voice to his grim thoughts;
"Prince Conrad's wife? Here in this Paynim wild?
"Old man you rave, she shipped four months agone,
Which I well know, for that fair paragon
Who turned the heads of all my fighting men,
Princes and knights and squires and men-at-ar
And hostlers; yea, and callous stable-boys,
After such fashion that who could not go
A weary march to set her on her ship,
Were cut to heart as if the sun had set
To never rise upon them anymore,

DID slip away before I had rejoined
Prince Conrad's force and so I saw her not;
That princess here unable to go on!
What devil from the pit did
Lodge her here
And sends us now her covert to unearth
By making to her nest so fresh a scent
The most lean dogs will trap her when we go?
Our staying here means nothing less than death
For her and us; and worse than death to her
And shame unthinkable to us if we stay not.
We know that at the first Death entered earth
Because a woman did unlock the door
And asked him in, and Cortes mother Eve
Hath given all her daughters each a key,
For from the time of Adam until now
They find more various shifts and ways to set
Death on our tracks than ever Nature dreams.
They are afraid and spears must fence them in,
They weep and men are slain to comfort them:
If they but droop an eyelid swords fly out
And bosom friends are at each others throats.
They sin as Grecian Helen and for that
The lands are ravened by the dogs of war,
They smile as Nilus' queen, and Antony
And Caesar make a shambles of the world.
This lady loves, so she must leave her bower
To tag across the world her easy prince,
Who though a very lion in a fight
Is but a docile spaniel to her call,
Into the thick of this rough game of war
On the precise occasion, hour and spot
To cry "checkmate" to our most potent play,
But for this halt fair Bethlehem were ours:
A thousand Adams is too dear a price
Wherewith to purchase a few scanty hours
Of troubled life for one poor little Eve

EVEN if the christian cause were not undone
By our undoing; to your lady then
And tell her she must for her life and ours
Ride on with us, see that she wastes no time
For time is now the essence of our hope
For look you where the signal smokes arise
North, South, east, west from hill and mountain peak
To call the moslem wolf-pack to its kill."
She came at Richard's summons leaning hard
On Elspeth, who could scarce restrain her tongue
At her command, from biting them with words
Of wrathful scorn at men's stupidity;
So much a child in her unconscious grace
Her wayward ringlets and her supple form,
Her innocent demeanr and fresh young face,
Her trustfulness that recked of men no harm.
So much a princess in her simple dress
Replete with subtle lines of daintiness;
Her little feet in well worn sandals shod
That walked the sands as she a palace trod,
Her calm brave eyes that mirrored naught but good,
Before them lady Philippina stood
A girlish princess, gracious, beautiful,
But all a woman now made wonderful
By the near imminence of motherhood.
And there was silence, for if there had risen
Out of the ground a spirit like the one
King Saul did summon near this haunted place,
It had no more astonished than should come
So delicate a lady from those rocks.
"Good gentlemen, I ask your patience, I
Prince Conrads wife, now my retreat is known,
Have very present need of your defence.
I hoped to lie safe hid till I was fit
For further travel but since God forbids
I think He sends you here to bulwark me.
And though as woman I can only claim

UCH kindness only on my own behalf
As chivalry demands of knightly men,
As Conrad's wife I have some larger claim.
They say my nursing saved my prince's life,
And none gainsay it was his single arm
Soon after hewed a lane to Richard's side
When Death had caught and hedged him in his fence.
Since now prince Conrad holdeth me most dear
By helping me you will requite to him
His service done the king and Christendom."
Then Richard, "What avails his saving me
For Christendom if now we throw away
My life and these, the stoutest men that fight
In the Crusade, for less than very naught?
I tell you we may not give battle here
With any slightest hope of winning out."
Then Phillipina answered "O my lord
Art thou king Richard? Why was I not told?
Forgive my plea of Conrad's succor given,
Nor let its obligation pull one hair
To hold you here one little moment's time
While on your shoulders rests the cause of Christ.
I pray you go; if Conrad's self were here
He would say go, yea on this instant go,
Even now the Christian host may be beset
By the wild heathen, may be backward driven
For lack of thee; I do beseech you go!
O if the cross be but a little shamed for me
My life were purchased at too dear a cost.
The Father God will surely warden me
If He still wants me in this present world;
To horse Sir King, thou and these few good men.
Too scant a guard gainst such a fearsome risk
As soon may face you in this open field:
It is a little task for God to bring
Me scathless to my Conrad's arms again
When He doth every moment guide the stars

THROUGH the wide reaches of the pathless sky
I was at fault to doubt His arm alone."
The king mused darkly, searching in her eyes
To read her heart and saw clear shining there
The courage of a little child who holds
Her father's hand and therefore cannot fear.
"What then of me," he said, "cannot God keep
Me also? Or doth He extend his aid
Only to love-sick girls and such-like fools
Who break all bounds to have their foolish will?
Could He not keep your Conrad, why must you
Forsooth be sent for; was his case too hard?"
"O good my lord, I pray you waste no time
In flouting me though I of all the fools
Most foolish be, I beg you on my knees
Let not the heavy weight of your delay
Lie on my soul: I cannot bear it so!"
"And leave you here to make a dainty feast
For starving desert jackals or for prey
Of devils in the guise of wolfish men?
Fie lady, where have flown your proper wits
That you (should) put so base a brand as that
On Richard's knighthood? By my faith the word
I just now spoke in jest concerning fools
May closer hug the mark than I have thought.
But truce to talk! Will you ride on with us
Or do we stay and look to your sweet prayers
To storm high heaven for our unshriven souls?"
"Since it must be, I go with you" she said,
"Tho my poor body cries to tarry here
And its revenge I can but greatly fear."
Her horse was brought but when the stalwart king
Lifted her gently as her father might,
Her senses swooned and drowned her stubborn will
To save, despite herself, herself from ill.
Then as the king strode to her rude retreat
Her head hung on his shoulder with her cheek,

FORSAKEN of its roses red and pink,
Laid ivory white against this ruddy neck,
While the thick braids of her unloosened hair
Made red gold quarterings on his sable mail,
And feeling her light weight in his strong arms
As of a tender maiden not full grown
He felt the greater burden on his heart
So fair a flower should be cut down so soon.
When Elspeth had revived her senses back,
She was the more determined still to go,
But Richard having had her in his arms,
And felt the dainty pressure of her cheek,
And marked the perfect curving of her throat,
And smelled the subtle fragrance of her hair;
And seeing then how great a soul was shrined
In the slight form of that sweet woman child,
Knew in his heart that in his stormy life
He never held so high a trust before
As was then laid on him in her behalf;
To keep this rarest plant from withering
Untimely, since to grow her like again
Slow generations must spring up and fade
While the poor world was faint for it's perfume.
To her he said, "My princess we have erred,
God sent me here to pay the heavy debt
Your Conrad laid on me at Jaffa's siege,
Also to teach me His most perfect work
Upon this earth is woman at her best.
A lesson I had need to learn before
I could be king of my own private realm
My soul, and for whose learning England's Crown
Were a small price if otherwise unlearned.
Now rest you here where you have made a bower
In these rough cisterns passing all belief
Were it not seen to my great wonderment,
And by heaven's help we will make safe your rest,
And in good time you shall wit Conrad's boy,

HICH we will Christen Richard, over pay
An hundred fold the debt that Richard owes."
Then smiled a kingly smile that warmed her heart,
And with a brother's kiss upon her brow
That brought glad tears to her brave homesick eyes
He left her comforted and went his way.
The knights had stood confounded by her state
And some cursed God that such a plight could be
Some prayed a miracle in her behalf.
Whereat some scoffed as at old nurse's tales,
Holding that nature took her even course
In a fixed orbit of unchanging law,
And could not swerve the thickness of a hair
For all the combined powers of earth and heaven.
But good Sir Christopher whose snow white beard
Matched well the color of his dauntless soul,
Spake as a gentleman should speak of God.
"My lords it ill becomes true hearted men
To weigh their Maker in too light a scale,
We can judge Him but by the best in us
Expanded to the utter range of thought.
Since God made Nature and not Nature God.
He doubtless hath her bridled, bitted too,
Else were His chariot wheels a juggernaut
To crush the hearts that love and trust in him,
That were a devil's sport, not God's nor men's;
For if we had such power and such a child
Should call on us as "Father" in such need,
Nature should loose the lightenings to her aid,
With earthquakes crack a moat to fence her in,
The sun should shoild shoot fierce arrows in the face
That held the cruel eyes that sought her harm.
Nature should wake the winds and with them pile
These choking sands to trap the wicked feet
That run to hurt her. If for her defense
Dame Nature was too slow, then Michael's host
Should bulwark her though it did empty heaven,

of all his warriors who hurled Satan down;
Since I a sinful man will give my life
With joy to succor my sweet lady here
I doubt not God will somehow find a way
Despite blind law and all the powers of hell."
Then bold sir Oswald said "God surely knows
With Richard here and we stout men beside
There is no pressing need to empty heaven
Nor yet to break dame Nature's iron laws;
Here comes the king and by his pleas and look
He means to fight against whatever odds
Men, or the Devil's malice send his way."
Full blithely spake the king, "Fair gentlemen
The princess cannot go, therefore we stay,
And since between us and the sinking sun
The desert wolves come swiftly to their prey
And it were pity they should have their meat
Before they earn it, get we quickly now
To our defences; I have told that child,
Who in a delicate fair body keeps
A heart that better mates the lion's than my own,
We will defend her to the death and then
Go with her to the shining battlements
And let her faith like righteous Lot's of old
Buy for us entrance into Paradise,
If that need be, but that we do intend
To so acquit ourselves that she can pay
Our debt to Conrad with her self coined gold
With Conrad's image graven on it's face."

HEN at the king's command men dug the marsh
And with wet clay strowed with tough rushes built
Encircleing ramparts, others piled great rocks,
Dug trenches and set thorny cactus traps,
Hobbled the horses in the sheltered rifts,
Cut grass for fodder mustard stalks for fires
And trapped the myriad coneys in their nests.
The sun went down upon their labors and red Mars
Led up the host of the embattled stars
Before their wall and moat were made complete.
At the first flush of dawn through a low fog
Burst the wild moslems, rushing on their camp
Like a sirroco striking every side,
While like a howling tempest shrilled their cries:
The cactus caught and snared them in it's thorns,
The ditches tumbled them beneath the hoofs
Of those that rode too hard behind to stop.
The buzzing arrows stung like bees of hell
And at the earthworks rose the fencing spears
Impaling horse and rider on their hedge,
While battle axe and mace did carry on
The work of death which these had well begun.
Then came the shock of Richard with his knights
On steel clad horses charging on their flanks
And swept their broken squadrons from the field;
So when the sun rose up and drove the fog
From off his field, he showed the Paynim horde
Flying across their lately traversed plain
Whence many came and few rode back again.

In this first battle was the christian gain
More than their loss, for few of them were hurt
And the slain horse's flesh when stripped and dried
Furnished them food, while a great store of spears
Arrows and javelins filled their armory:
But noon came hot and all the ghostly hills
Stretched up into the sky and glowered on them,
The sinuous desert ridges seemed to creep
Toward their camp like dragons from the pit
Or spawn of phantom pools which the fierce heat
Bred in the hollows of the glowing sands
While from the east and south and west and north
The signal smokes rose specter-like to call
Wild huntsmen to avenge their comrad's fall.
The evening fell and gainst the level sun
The horsemen and the camels and the spears
Moved toward their hill and through the night the sound
Of armies on their march was on the wind
And morning showed their camp beleaguered round
With a great host encamped on every side.
There followed days of battle when the foe
Harrassed them constantly from dawn till dark,
Coming against them thick on every side
Fierce as Numidian lions, fearing not
The play of swords and lances, courting death
As their beloved since death would open wide
To them the seven heavens of delight
Promised by Mahomet to all who fall
Fighting for Islam in a holy war.
But Richard's men were very flower and pick
Of the crusaders therefore when the brunt
Of war rolled on them it did break away
In waves of broken men and shattered horse,
While still the iron ring of their defense
Broke not though strained almost to outermost.

ILL taught by bitter loss and cruel wounds
The Moslems ceased their mad assaults and lay
Safe in their tents and waited for their day.
The eve of Christmas came and the wornKing
Was with the princess for he came each day
At morn and eve that he might solace her,
And to renew his courage from the fire
That burned upon the altar of her heart
As quenchless as the vital breath wherewith
God quickened man to an immortal soul;
And he had dared to think such faith as hers
Might call the hidden forces of the earth,
Or even the principalities and powers
Of the ethereal spaces to her aid;
And he had fought to save her like a King
Who reigns a King by right of Kingliness,
But now he knew the master conqueror
Against whom courage, strength and feats of arms
Alike are powerless; grisly Famine, stood
Hard by their gates and soon would entrance gain
Making for them all human hoping vain.
She read his thoughts although he spoke them not,
And from her pillow in the hollow curve
Of Conrad's shield where she took sheltering
For that he oft had clasped it to his breast,
She answered hopefully, "My Conrad still
May raise our siege, for surely he must know
That you are trapped, he will make no delay
Longer than will suffice to bring to head
Sufficient force to make your rescue sure.
I know by signs infallible but hid
In a mysterious chamber of my heart
That holds a harp whose strings are keyed to thrill
To Conrad's motions, that each day he comes
Nearer to us than on the day before.

Y father's presence too hath been with me,
"Philip the good" of Hohenwettersbach
To him my Conrad sends the sword and shield
With which he won new honors for our house
For they are kinsmen; he did bid me rest
On "Faith and Courage" which brave words are cut
Deep in the lintel of our castle door
And deeper in the fibre of his heart;
Wherefore I look to see a sure release
From out our toils else Heaven would not have sent
Such messengers of hope to comfort me."
King Richard would not try to dim her hope
But spake with Elspeth privily and asked
"Hast thou a dagger? Canst thou with it still
A brave heart's beating, mercifully but sure?"
And Elspeth touched her gown and showed a hilt
And answered, "This shall open heaven for her
If all else fail, though it do send me down
To hell's black pit" and he commended her.
Then came two boyish squires who in their hearts
Had shrined the princess as beyond compare
The noblest, best and fairest flower of earth
And who were wont to sing for her betimes,
These sat them down beside her open door
And picking on their lutes they sang full sweet
And joyously as they had been at home
In merry England singing with the waits,
An ancient carol for the Christmastide
Which brought to those within such comforting
As if an angel had been hymning there
A song of peace and heaven's good will to men.

" LUSTY tree is eache New Yeare,
Be happy goode folk errie one,
That God makes a new yeare appear
So soon as the old yeare is gone,
For certes we love all full dear.

Twelve limbs euche hath and on eache one,
For so God willeth it to grow,
Full thirty boughs when alle are grown
And eache bough maketh goodly show
Of twentie-four twigs lacking none.

One score and four and eache is dressed,
God maketh alle things faire to see,
In three score leaves, none like the rest,
And eache so pretty is to mee
Eache one of alle of them seems best.

By errie leaf grows berrie sweet
So God doth still His sparrows feed,
Which verie wholsome is to eat
Supplying for eache moment's neede
The food for errie moment meete.

The topmost bough of errie tree,
Be merrie goode folk ererie one,
Bears fruit that sweetest is to mee
For when the yeare hath nearly run
Sweet Christmas ripeneth merrily.

Be glad grode people, have no feare
Though errie old yeare come to ende
For erer will come faire New Yeares
For us to have and lose and spend;
What matter though it be not here? "

T midnight the still desert lay asleep,
Beneath the calm-eyed stars the hostile camps
Forgot the battle's tumult as they dreamed,
While silently the watchmen went their rounds.
In the next watch a trumpet waked to tell
That a new prince was born and all was well,

And they that waking read its message took
New hope that this should fall on Christmas morn.
That omened well; then soon a rumour ran
Some wondrous thing had happened, that were gone
Sir Christopher, the chaplain and the king
At Phillipina's call to see this thing

So marvelous that Elspeth and the maids
Full half distraught with wonderment and joy
Were on their knees before prince Conrad's shield
Which cradled now a lusty baby boy,
White clothed and well their noble lady sat
With Conrad's sword and sang magnificat.

Now when the three were come into her place
They found it warmed and lighted by a fire
Of ancient cedar wood that smelled full sweet
And on the ledges delicate sweet flowers
And in the shield laid in fair broiderie
The sleeping babe beneath a rosary

Of precious pearls each carved with holy signs;
And the three maids a weeping for sheer joy
And lady Phillipina robed in blue
Fondling a sword whose cross-crowned hilt was set
With gleaming rubies, singing tenderly
Sweet Mary's hymn, as one in ecstasy.

THEN they stood all amazed in fear that she
Had lost her wits through stress of pain and joy,
But she rose lightly up and clasped their hands
And drawing to her babe undid it's robe
And showed upon it's tender breast displayed
A blood red cross that tapered to a blade.

Flesh of it's flesh and pulsing with it's life,
Yet was it's comliness thereby unmarred.
The tincture of the mark was of such dye
As stains the ruby and it's every line
Perfection, so that having seen it there
All other baby breasts were henceforth bare.

Down went the priest upon his shaking knees,
The king and Christopher they knelt also
While on his breast each made the holy sign,
And steadfastly they looked upon the babe
Making swift question of their eyes if they
In what they seemed to see might not betray.

While thus enwrapt, behind them crept a man
Noiseless as Death, on Death's grim errand bent,
Lean, naked, brown as his own desert hills,
His sinewy arm drawn backward for a thrust
And at the king he aimed a deadly dart
Which would not fail to pierce the Lion-heart.

His eyes met that astounding sight and straight
His lust of blood was chilled to sudden dread,
His arm fell limp, his body sank to earth,
His forehead grovelled lowly in the dust;
Nor men nor Death could work in him base fear
But God he feared and God's work saw he there

ON Jesu's natal day he came to smite
In Alla's name his country's bitter foes,
He found a queenly mother with a babe
Before whom king and priest and warrior knelt,
Sealed in its flesh with the most sacred sign
Of Him both foe and Moslem held divine.

He looked again and met the mother's eyes,
Calm as an angel's and as unafraid,
Then at her mute command he stole away
Through the hid pipe by which he had come in,
And soon the Moslem camps had heard a tale
Whose hearing made all hearts begin to fail.

For who might doubt the word of Imbrahim?
Their chiefest warrior, scribe of the Koran,
Prince-prophet of a mighty Arab klan
Whose power even Saladin must hold in awe;
So there was running to and fro and much ado
But none dared say his tale might be untrue.

Meanwhile had Phillipina laid her son
In the mailed arms of Richard, "Lion-King,"
To be the sponsor of his christening
And Richard said "I would that it might be
But I am too unworth and sin defiled.
To be Godfather to your holy child."

She answered, "Now already hath my babe
By God's grace holpen you from cruel death;
See where the spear of the assasin lies.
And by this cross he seals us every one
Fair promise of the matchless help of Heaven,
Whereby be sure He hath our sins forgiven."

THEY christened him with names of four brave m
Richard and Conrad, Phillip, Christopher
Which well befitted one who at his birth
Wore the crusader's badge above his heart
And nursed a breast that could not harbor f
While it believed God was both good, and nea

They joined him to Christ's living bride, the Church,
With water brought from sacred Jordan's stream,
They clasped his hands about his father's sword
And prayed that he might smite the Infidel
If by Heaven's help he should deliverance get
Out from the cruel net which they had set;

Then going forth to see how Christmas dawned
And lifting up their eyes toward the hills,
Beheld against Aurora's golden shield
A moving cloud of spears that drove to east,
And where their net had spread and all between
Lay the white desert, of all foes swept clean.

Then as they mazed the christian trumpets spoke
And as one man the Christian host arose,
Ready to bar with fifty score of breasts
The whirlwind charge of fifty hundred foes
Nor could conceive how where those foes had been
No sign of foe could anywhere be seen.

So stood as men who waking dream until
King Richard's voice uplift the opening strain
Of a crusader's hymn, then the sweet air
Was cleft asunder with the mighty cry
Of men who seeing Death's forged chain was riven
From out full hearts did tell their thanks to Heaven.

WHEN Richard and his chiefest captains went
To see the Moslem camps they found much fruit,
Great store of corn and many horses tied
And hung upon a bannerette on lance
A letter folded, sealed and fair addressed
Unto the Sable Knight with lion-crest;

"We fear not men, but who may fight with God?
Take thou our present to the Angel-eyed
Who suckles at her breast the holy Babe,
And in the name of Allah bid her go
From out our coasts, lest for her sake we die,
We and our people for on us doth lie

Sin's heavy curse although we knew it not;
How might we know an handmaid of the Lord
With her young child sealed with Messiah's seal
Lay in your tents for whom His angels fought?
Bid her not tarry, see her paths are straight,
Behold our camels for her journey wait."

Which when the King had read he crossed his breast
And pondered on the secret ways of God.
While thus he mused there came to him a man,
As lean and brown as his own desert hills,
Clothed as a prince, who led sedate and slow
Two dromedaries white as Hermon's snow,

Which bare between them slung from cedar poles
A travel bed with silken cushioning
And purple curtains cunningly enwrought
With needle work of golden arabesques,
While on the camels headstalls there were hung
Small silver bells that pleasant changes rung.

HEN Imbrahim bowed to the earth and said,
"Peace be with you whom Allah holds so dear
He makes you harder of his holy ones.
Will you deign eat the bread I offer you?"
And reading through his eyes his soul the king
Ate doubting not, of his peace offering.

Then Imbrahim made beconing and there came
Across the sands like children of the wind,
Two other sheiks dismounting at his side
And these he set before the king and said,
"Behold my lord our lives are in thy hand
We come to guide you from this dangerous land.

For if we go not with you you will find
The sting of poison in the water founts,
A bowman hid behind each sheltering rock,
Foes thick as wild bees in the little hills
And in the mountains those who long have lain
In wait for you to pass that way again."

So Richard brought them to the Christian camp
And told the princess how her faith had wrought,
And coming in they bowed them to the ground
With foreheads grovelling lowly in the dust,
And gave her gifts, a priceless offering
Of gold and gems, the ransom of a king.

Then lady Phillipina drew the shawl
That lightly wrapped the sleeping babe and showed
Upon his breast the ruby tinted cross
That tapered to the semblance of a sword,
And said "Upon His birthday Jesu sends
This sign to make of bitter foes fast friends;

UT as for me I am as one of you
No better; nay I may less worthy be
Still Alla's child and to the least of His
His promise holdeth sure, to Him I cried
And of my weakness He hath forged this sword
Wherewith to prove the honor of His word."

Then Imbrahim stood up and said "Behold
A child of the Most High, forever blest.
A daughter of the King who doubting not
Her royal lineage holdeth in her hands
The keys to all the powers of earth and heaven
For unto such His signet ring is given.

We came against her with ten thousand spears,
Our swords were hot and thirsty for her blood,
We gnashed upon her with the teeth of lions,
Of starving lions ravening for prey:
She decked her bower with lillies white and red
And laid her down in peace upon her bed.

In the mad rage of battle she brought forth
A son whose countenance is framed in peace
And he shall be to many "Comforter"
But unto her the messenger from God
Saying "Fear not, I slumber not nor sleep
For I the Shepherd care for every sheep"

Beloved of Allah, know thy lightest breath
Breathing a prayer to the Omnipotent,
Is stronger far than fierce Euroclydon
Lashing his foaming billows through the seas:
Our spears are scattered, Hate hath lost his prey,
Our lions come to guard you on your way."

WHILE yet the day was young the christian host
Went on its way toward the western hills.
Before them rode a sheik and behind
His brother sheik kept the rearward guard,
While in the midst the drowsy dromedaries went
Bearing our lady in her pretty tent

With Elspeth and the babe and next to it
Rode always some the chiefest of the knights,
And overhearing somewhat of their talk,
Our lady said to them "What think you men,
Hath God forgot this world He made so fair
Or hath it still His constant love and care?"

And one reluctantly made answer then,
"My lady, might not that imprint be given
By your own nature which unconscious wore
In your babe's flesh the symbol of your love?"
Then she "O wise philosopher and might
King Richard's sword, not Richard, win his fight?

If in my body Nature made such stir,
Where the imaginations of our hearts
Could think nor dream no way for our escape,
That she did arm my tender babe so well
That by him was a mighty host o'erthrown
His rifted desert sand by tempest blown.

Then Nature hath an ear to hearing cry,
An heart to feel and pity my distress,
The wisdom to devise my succoring,
The power to move the secret springs of life
In close alliance till my peace be won.
But granted that, then God and she are one."

"WHY prate of law as if law were the king?
Nay, law is always servant to some lord;
Although his weapon be a deadly thing
The soldier wins his battles, not his sword.
Good servant Law sits not upon the throne
There the Omnipotent must reign alone.

Why prate of love as if love were begot
By loveless Law of grim Necessity?
Nay, like from like; Love's self it was that brought
The seeds of love that blossom now in me
In mother-love that hath it's sweet perfumes
From God's own heart where love eternal blooms.

O men, your logic hath not learned to fly
Nor scarce to walk but only crawls and clings;
Brave Faith doth sweep the orbits of the sky
With eye undimmed on his triumphant wings.
Yet in my heart hath made a garden fair
To which he giveth tender thought and care."

And Richard heard and calling all his knights
He ringed them round her in a place of palms
Saying "She shames us though we be men grown
And she a woman child scarce out of school.
"Courage and Faith," who hath them knightly is,
Who lacks them is as one who beateth air;
By these she hath saved all we here from death,
We who have fought to win Christ's empty tomb
Forgetful of the things He died to teach."
Then with his sword he lightly touched her neck
And made her there a knight of the crusade,
And there were none that questioned that he did
For they all held her knightliest in their hearts.
Then they besought her favors wherefore she
Took from her bosom her dear rosary.

IVING to each a pearl warm from her breast:
To Imbrahim the greatest for their lives
Were in his hand and he had let them live
But unto Richard that most precious thing
It's crucifix, which he would wear till death
His dearest treasure though he were a king.
When from the desert they came to the hills
Whose breath was as the breath of Lebanon,
There every rock gave shelter to a man
And all the trees bore fruit of fighting men;
Bow men and sling men a great multitude
Swarming like wild bees in the clefts and caves;
And there were avalanches held in leash
And solid ledges undermined and hung
So one weak arm could hurl them down the heights,
Which Richard seeing said "Sir knights our road
Where I had thought to lead to Bethlehem,
Had been our graveyard set with monuments
Weighty enough to hold us in our beds
Till trump of doom, had not our lady here
Held us her guests and thus outwitted Death."
These mountains were impregnable to force
But unto Imbrahim an open way
So they passed through and on the further side
Saw with glad hearts prince Conrad's pennons fly
In the forefront of his embattled host,
Which he had brought as far as captain might
Against a foe he could not reach to fight.
King Richard's trumpets sang a merry song
Which brought the prince fast spurring o'er the plain
Eager to greet the royal comrade whom
He scarce had hoped to meet in flesh again.
They met as friends who held each other dear
But as old veterans used to Mar's swift plays
Where with he makes his game of war replete
Lest men should slacken interest in it's sport,
Not over much surprised at any chance.

UT When prince Conrad saw the travel-bed
And the veiled maids, he marveled that should be
At such a time in such a warheld place.
Then Richard asked how fared his princess wife,
When last he heard and was her journey fair,
Whereat he answered with a troubled brow:
"Had not your peril made my duty plain
I weeks ago would have been on my way
In search of her, for she is not yet home
And her old father heedless of his years
In all the ports seek tidings of her ship
While her nine brothers compass land and sea
And every mariner that sails the main
Hath promise of great bounty for some word.
Now must I instantly be on my way,
Since you are safe, to ransack the whole world
Untill I find her, for I know she lives.
I cannot tell you how, and that she still
Is well and holds me ever in her thoughts
But more I know not nor can even tell
How this I know; so here I say farewell."
King Richard kissed him on the cheek and said
"Now do I know what David must have felt
For Jonathan his friend, but by God's grace
There have some-what that will make my debt
To you seem lighter, in yon travel-car
Is that will pay my ransom, over-weight
Heaped up and running over;" Then he lead
Him trembling with a sudden hope that yet
Seemed but mad fancy cheating his torn heart,
To the fulfilment which so far but reached
His fondest hope, it stunned him with it's joy
And left him weak as his own baby boy
Untill love's medicine could be applied
By her who often on him it had tried. ==
At even tide the Sheik led the three
Outside the camp and showed to them afar

AGAINST a shining cloud of amethest
The golden dome and towering minerets
That marked the spot which they had longed
Had vowed to reach and shed their [to see / blood to win]
And kneeling there they worshiped joyfully
Untill night's purple curtains shut from sight
The church of the Most Holy Sepulcher.
Then Imbrahim did bless them there and said
"Conrad thy vow is kept, take thou thy wife
To her own land, there she must show forth heaven
To many blind and weary ones of earth.
King Richard thou must go not many years
To meet the King of Kings who will forgive
Thy sins of body for thy knightly soul;
But now behold the Prince of Peace hath left
A sword on earth till it shall prune away
The bitter weeds of envy, hate and greed
Till then man wars with man and covetousness
Shall desolate the gardens love doth plant
Saved where the strong man armed doth keep the gate.
But we are caught together in Love's net
And though this day our paths must separate,
Our hands will stretch across the spacious world,
Will bridge grim Charon's ferry and will hang
Their shining garlands on the trees of life
That fringe the streams of Paradise the blest
Which when we sit beneath we shall rehearse
Few tales as marvelous as how we here
Were turned from hunter's of each others lives
To friends and lovers, by a slender girl
And her young babe, that God might be revealed.
Now fare we well, how other can we fare
Since now we see and walk no more as blind?
But now the blood red star hath risen above
The Inn of the Nativity, good night,
Our little Sister must not lack for sleep,
In Paradise again we'll Christmas keep.

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